Handout 3: Research Rules

1. Be clear about the question you are asking. Clarify what you mean and be exact about the questions you want to ask.

2. Be clear about why you are asking the questions. Consider if there is any one who has a vested interest in the results of your research. Consider your relationship to these groups.

3. Be aware of the constraints i.e. time, money skills, and access to community, political problems. It’s better to design a more modest piece of research which you can be sure you will complete than to be too ambitious and never complete the task.

4. Don’t work by yourself. Interact, listen, share ideas and seek advice.

5. Be questioning and thorough. Don’t be happy with the first answer you come up with. Seek more information and try to look at the same questions in different ways.

6. Be sensitive. Be aware of the political and underlying aspects of your work.

7. Use your imagination. Look at the research problem in different ways. You might want to present your findings in an interesting way such as using art and photography to get your meaning across.

8. Be ethical. Remember the rights of people you are researching.

9. Be flexible. If problems develop be prepared to change the way you are doing your research.